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AN IMITATION MONROE DOCTRINE

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For some years Japanese writers, with high ambition for the expansion of their country, have advanced arguments for the misuse and misapplication of the American Monroe Doctrine to Eastern Asia. Having made for some years a study of this Doctrine, I venture to apply the study to the great issues of today in China and all the Far East.

The Monroe Doctrine in its original purport is easy of comprehension, but having been in existence for over ninety years, it has become for many Americans a national shibboleth, and thus diverted from its rightful function. It is this shibboleth rather than the Doctrine which seems useful to the purposes of Japan. It is misconception of the Doctrine which deludes Japan and now endangers China. Both the Doctrine and the misconception need examination.

As Prof. Theodore Woolsey has said of the Monroe Doctrine, "before all and throughout all we must keep in mind that it is a policy, not a law, municipal or international." So Hon. Elihu Root has said "No one ever pretended that Mr. Monroe was declaring a rule of international law or that the Doctrine which he declared has become international law."

The Doctrine is one of several foreign policies pursued by the American Government through different administrations, and frequently these policies, suited to varying conditions, have modified or expanded the original thought of the Doctrine. Sometimes certain principles, imbedded in the Doctrine, have won the approval of other governments, have been worked into agreements, and then carry the force of international law. It is all-important that we grasp the main principles of the Doctrine, distinguish them from collateral principles of other policies, and see whether or not

Japan can make use of them, under the American name or some other name like that of Count Okuma.

There is not much doubt but that Japan has thought out a policy bearing some resemblance to the Monroe Doctrine. Like most Japanese imitations it is not equal to the original.

1. The first plain intent of the Monroe Doctrine has been to prevent any additional *aggression of foreign Powers* on the States of the two American continents. The Powers originally indicated were European Powers. The principle of the Doctrine, however, applies equally to any aggressions by Asiatic Powers. In the language of the famous message of President Monroe, December 2, 1823, the principle announced is "that the American continents by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Powers;" that the United States declares that any attempt on the part of these Powers "to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our (American) peace and safety;" and that "it is impossible that the allied Powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our (American) peace and happiness."

This principle is made known to the European Powers as being primarily of concern to the welfare of the United States, and secondarily of value to the other American republics. The United States then or since has thus made no pretense of any high altruism as distinct from national self-interest and self-preservation. Still, it need not be supposed that the United States by this announcement, has no concern for the welfare of her sister republics.

There are two ways in which Japan can make application of this basic principle. One is that Japan, like European Powers, shall not extend her monarchical system or her political designs to either of the American continents. The other is that Japan for her own "peace and safety," as well as from desire to maintain the "free and independent condition" of China, Siam, Korea or other states in Eastern Asia, will declare to the world that *no European or American*

Power shall make any aggression on the Asiatic continent. If such a declaration could have been made, say twenty years ago, and if Japan could have compelled Russia, Great Britain, France and Germany to abide by the declaration, she would have won glory for herself and security for China.

2. That this principle of the Monroe Doctrine might be clear beyond any doubt, President Monroe made the following distinction:

With the existing Colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with governments who have established their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

These may be called two aspects of the one principle already considered. If, in 1823, *any European government had any possession* on the American continent, it must suffer no interference from the United States—an act of friendliness to Europe; and on the other hand if a former European colony had succeeded in becoming independent, it must *suffer no interference* from any European Power. Every part of the American continent was to remain in *status quo*.

For ninety years both aspects have been observed, except in the case of Maximilian's encroachment on Mexico, about fifty years ago, when through action of the American government, the French were induced to withdraw, and leave Mexico independent.

If Japan could have announced some such policy, in the same year, 1823, with reference to the Asiatic continent, how different would have been the positions of Great Britain, France and Russia from what they are today; but unfortunately Japan was then incapable of being a leader, and China, the strongest of Asiatic countries, had no such aspirations.

Supposing, however, that Japan announces this policy to

begin with 1915, then none of the European possessions already secured, no matter how, will be interfered with by Japan, and she in addition will see to it that the independence of China and Siam and smaller kingdoms will not be interfered with by European Powers, or suffer from them oppression or control. So far as China is concerned, such a policy on the part of Japan has already been transmuted into law, by special agreements with Great Britain, Russia, France and the United States. *The idea of preserving the territory of China's wide domains*—an idea which is both a law and a policy—deserves the most serious adhesion of Japan, Europe and America.

It must be taken for granted that Japan is willing to assist China in resisting further encroachment by European Powers, and in this she has grasped the essential meaning of the Monroe Doctrine, and is plainly determined to respect and observe it. This is to Japan's credit and deserves recognition on the part of Europe and America. So far, therefore, as the essence of the Doctrine is concerned, it is to be hoped that Japan will succeed in applying it to China and all Eastern Asia.

3. A legitimate expansion of the Monroe Doctrine, or, if so desired, to be regarded as a distinct policy of the American government, is what is known as the Magdalena Bay resolution of Senator Lodge on August 2, 1912, which reads as follows:

Resolved: That when any harbor or other place in the American continent is so situated that the occupation thereof for naval or military purposes might threaten the communications or the safety of the United States, the government of the United States could not see without grave concern the possession of such harbor or other place by any corporation or association which has such a relation to another government not American as to give that government practical power of control for national purposes.

Though Senator Lodge did not choose to regard the resolution as an extension of the Monroe Doctrine, it seems to me to bear so close a resemblance as to be worthy of imitation on the part of Japan in reference to China.

The following criticism has been passed on the resolution:

If the republics which occupy the territory of America to the south of the United States are independent nations, in full enjoyment of their political sovereignty, and have the same title and the same capacity in the family of nations as North America has, then neither the Senate nor the Government at Washington has the power to proclaim before the world, as a rule of international conduct applicable to the territories of foreign sovereigns, the Lodge proposal.

This criticism also seems to me to be just. The United States State Department should by exchange of notes or by formal agreements secure the acquiescence of other republics on the American continent, only in this case the Doctrine would become a law and thus cease to be a Doctrine. The intent of the principle would not, however, suffer diminution.

The principle with the criticism may well be applied by Japan to the interests of self-preservation in the Far East. Japan is to be commended for negotiating with China *that no harbor, island or bay along the China coast shall henceforth be ceded to any other Power*. The only ground for suspicion is that Japan should submit the principle as a demand, and thus infringe the character of sovereignty which the principle is claimed to defend. The criticism is thus similar to that which is made of the United States by other independent governments on the American continent. For attempting to maintain a sound policy Japan as much as the United States deserves commendation and not reproof.

4. Another expansion of the Monroe Doctrine is that the United States will *avoid entanglements with European Powers*. Speaking from the critic's point of view, this means that as the United States is supposed to keep European countries out of affairs on the American continent, she herself will stay out of the affairs of Europe. This may be called a corollary of the main principle or axiom. It really is more a statement of a policy believed in from the time of Washington, and distinct from the Monroe Doctrine.

There is one passage in President Monroe's famous message which suggests this phase of American policy:

"In the wars of the European Powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so."

How strong this policy is in the thought of Americans—call it Monroe Doctrine or not—may be seen in the Senate resolution in ratification of the Arbitration Conventions of the Hague Conferences, and cited by Hon. Elihu Root in an able discussion of "The Real Monroe Doctrine." The reservation made to these conventions reads thus:

Nothing contained in this convention shall be so construed as to require the United States of America to depart from its traditional policy of not intruding upon, interfering with, or entangling itself in the political questions of policy or internal administration of any foreign State, nor shall anything contained in the said convention be construed to imply a relinquishment by the United States of its traditional attitude towards purely American questions.

Now, the use made by Japan of this definite American policy is not in prescribing for herself a sound principle, but in *utilizing it to keep the United States out of all Far Eastern affairs.*

It is by such use of what is understood to be the Monroe Doctrine, that Dr. Honda, of Japan, warns the United States away from the Far East, leaving everything here to Japan's direction. He says:

It is on the implicit understanding of America's non-interference with other continents that the continental republic is left free of outside interference. But the United States of America has now secured the necessary stepping stones (the Hawaiian Islands, Guam and the Philippines), across the Pacific Ocean to reach China and claim a due share of influence over her destinies. It is impossible to reconcile two such contradictory measures. In order to make its position tenable in world politics, American diplomacy must needs choose between the horns of an awkward dilemma. It must either sacrifice the Monroe Doctrine, or restrict its application within a much smaller sphere of influence, or return to its traditional avoidance of foreign entanglement by staying on the high plane of international morality.

It is true, indeed, that the United States *is willing to avoid "foreign entanglements"* in Asia as well as in Europe, but this cannot excuse her from performing her duties as a world

Power in accord with treaties made with every country on the face of the globe. She will with pleasure avoid entanglements and intermeddlings and unlawful encroachments, whatever the continent or the country, but will not forego her right to hold relations with Europe or Asia, to continue to trade with them and carry on educational and religious work, or to do what these countries, in exercise of their sovereign powers, have stipulated may or must be done.

5. A new and logical expansion of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States is that of *joint coöperation with strong governments* like Argentine, Brazil and Chile, called the "A. B. C." countries, in any necessary interference in turbulent countries, like Mexico and some Central America States. Even with this joint action, there is a joint determination to annex no territory. This is a policy, as President Wilson has stated it, to promote "the most cordial understanding and coöperation between the peoples and leaders of America."

This joint mediation policy—call it Monroe Doctrine or not—has been advocated by ex-President Roosevelt and has for the first time been put to the test by President Wilson in relation to the revolutionary condition of Mexico. Such a willingness to coöperate with other great American Republics has done more than anything else to dispel criticism and suspicion.

Such an application of an imitation Monroe Doctrine presents fewer difficulties to Japanese aspirations. It would have meant coöperation between Japan and China in establishing an orderly Korean Government in Korea. It means coöperation between Japan and Great Britain in British possessions, if Britain requests the help. It means coöperation between China and Japan in suppressing revolutions in China, as China shall so request and when she shall so request. As a beginning, Japan can put a check to Chinese revolutionary plots engineered from Japan.

This "*joint mediation*" does not mean Japanese control of the Chinese police and military administrations in even Manchuria, any more than it would mean the intrusion of the United States into the police systems of Argentine

or Brazil. What "joint mediation" is, requires a little more careful study on the part of Japanese statesmen, just as does the whole Monroe Doctrine.

6. While the two essential and two subsidiary principles as above stated of the Monroe Doctrine are worthy of imitation by Japan, one *misconception* of the Doctrine, needing to be shunned, strikes the Japanese with greater force; and that is, that by the Monroe Doctrine the *United States aims to dictate* to all other republics on the American continent, and reserves for herself the right of annexing other people's territory.

In other words, the Monroe Doctrine is made to mean that interference in the independent sovereignty of any state, and intervention in affairs of the American continent, are not permissible for European Powers, but are legitimate for the United States.

The President of the Argentine Republic has stated the case in one compact clause: "North American domination instead of European domination."

This misconception, this suspicion, has existed in the minds of many citizens of other American republics. It is without substantial foundation. As Professor Callahan has said, "Americans, who logically in their early history established their boundaries on the gulf, for a half century have not been inclined to encroach upon the territories of their neighbors." And again: "It is true that much Latin-American suspicion of American territorial designs was justified in the decade before the American civil war, when under the influence of American leaders of the southern states, the shibboleth of 'Manifest Destiny' was added to the doctrine of national security." But this idea has been a long time dead.

Of late years the most able of American statesmen have undertaken in many ways to remove this suspicion, not so much raised by acts of the United States as by acts of others. It has been to the great interest of Europe to foster this suspicion.

In 1906 President Roosevelt in a message to Congress used these words: "An idea had become prevalent that our

assertion of the Monroe Doctrine implied or carried with it an assumption of superiority and of a right to exercise some kind of protectorate over the countries to whose territory that Doctrine applies. Nothing could be farther from the truth."

Hon. Elihu Root, who made a special visit to South America for removing such suspicions and misconceptions, has written as follows:

A false conception of what the Monroe Doctrine is, of what it demands and what it justifies, of its scope and of its limits, has invaded the public press and affected public opinion within the past few years. Grandiose schemes of national expansion invoke the Monroe Doctrine. . . . Thoughtless people who see no difference between lawful right and physical power assume that the Monroe Doctrine is a warrant for interference in the internal affairs of all weaker nations in the New World. Against this supposititious doctrine many protests both in the United States and in South America have been made, and justly made. To the real Monroe Doctrine these protests have no application.

President Wilson in a speech delivered at Mobile, October 27, 1913, stated the matter in positive terms:

"I want to take this occasion to say that the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest."

This false conception of the Monroe Doctrine is what Japan gladly seizes for application to China and all Eastern Asia. She resents any more interference from European and American Powers, and on the basis of a popular and accredited doctrine in the States across the Pacific, argues herself into believing that she has the right to intrude, interfere, control and dominate in the affairs and independent sovereignty of Eastern Asia.

The present attempt to establish a hegemony in China can find no parallel in the Monroe Doctrine. What Japan during the last twenty years did, after war with China and Russia, in the way of acquiring territory more than matches what the United States has done during a period of ninety years. Her acquisitions are sufficient. Let her now follow Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson, and Secretaries Root

and Bryan and show beyond a doubt that she will not injure or destroy the sovereignty and independence of China, which in treaty she has solemnly agreed to. As the United States has earnestly tried to remove all suspicion of her actions, whether belonging to the Monroe Doctrine or not, so the duty which lies before Japan is to overcome the suspicions which her varied actions and her late twenty-one demands have most effectually stirred into being.

7. A second misconception of the Monroe Doctrine is that non-interference, with no more territorial aggrandizement, by European Powers on the American continents, means that they shall not undertake any commercial or industrial development in any of these countries. Even a cursory glance at trade statistics is enough to explode this fallacy. Each sovereign state regulates its own trade on the basis of equal opportunity to business men of all nations. Japan is as free as Europe to trade in both North and South America.

Similarly in all parts of China, from Manchuria to Tibet, should be the independent right to trade with any and with all, with no more of these foreign-devised spheres of interest or spheres of influence, to China's aggravation and peril.

Mr. J. O. P. Bland helps Japan out by asking this question: "Could America claim the right to an active part in the affairs of Eastern Asia, while bound by the traditional policy of the Monroe Doctrine?" I would certainly say she has the right, so far as trade and industry are concerned, and this, too, within all the domains of the Chinese Republic. This idea has already been considered under another aspect of the general question.

As to preserving the independence and integrity of China, there is no responsibility resting on the United States through application of Japan's adopted Monroe Doctrine; but there is a responsibility resting on the United States, Great Britain, France and Russia, because of agreements or understandings made with them by Japan. It is not a law, not a doctrine or a policy, which binds these five Powers, European, American and Asiatic.

For Japan to attempt in the slightest degree to weaken

China's sovereignty, independent action, or free initiative, and for the United States and the three European Powers to excuse themselves from protest and interposition, is to cast law to the winds, and to turn international relations into a chaos "without form and void."